

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
PARK BOARD  
HELD AT PUBLIC WORKS & PARK MAINTENANCE FACILITY  
December 11, 2012  
7:00 PM**

***I. CALL TO ORDER***

Chair Steel called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

***II. ROLL CALL***

Answering roll call were Members Cella, Jones, Gieseke, Jacobson, Segreto, Steel

Member Kathryn Peterson arrived at 7:03 pm

Member O'Leary arrived at 7:05 pm

Member Almog arrived at 7:07 pm

Member Deeds arrived at 7:27 pm

***III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA***

**Member Jones made a motion, seconded by Member Segreto, to have Item VI.B. Off-Road Cycling Trail Proposal – Braemar Park moved to be the first item on the agenda.**

Ayes: Members Steel, Kathryn Peterson, Gieseke, Jacobson, Segreto, Cella, Jones, Deeds

Motion Carried

**Member Gieseke made a motion, seconded by Member Jacobson to approve the meeting agenda.**

Ayes: Members Steel, Kathryn Peterson, Gieseke, Jacobson, Segreto, Cella, Jones, Deeds

Motion Carried

***IV. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA***

**Member Segreto made a motion, seconded by Member Cella, approving the consent agenda as follows:**

**IV.A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Park Board Meeting of Monday, November 19, 2012**

Ayes: Members Steel, Kathryn Peterson, Gieseke, Jacobson, Segreto, Cella, Jones, Deeds

Motion Carried

***V. COMMUNITY COMMENT***

None

***VI. REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS***

**VI.A. Off-Road Cycling Trail Proposal – Braemar Park**

Mr. Keprios commented that staff is looking for Park Board's approval in concept for this project. He stated if Park Board feels this is not an appropriate activity to study in concept without knowing anything from studies, he would propose it be tabled or voted down, if it is something you do not feel is worth studying. He noted that if members vote in favor of the project, it doesn't mean you are approving the project to move forward, but rather it means that you are approving to further study it.

Mr. Keprios pointed out secondly he would like for the Park Board to help staff establish an appropriate process on how to go about future projects that are presented to staff because as staff they don't

necessarily know what the Park Board is interested in seeing. He stated that from a staff standpoint they felt this might be worth looking at; it doesn't necessarily mean it is something that needs to be done.

Mr. Keprios explained he does not know a whole lot about the sport and that he pretty much stole everything that was provided in the staff report from the proponents who are bringing this forward. He apologized to the Park Board if it sounds a little too salesmanship; he should have adjusted it.

Mr. Keprios stated that the Park Board needs to do two things; first, discuss whether you think it's worth it in concept and secondly, what would be an appropriate process. If Park Board would like to move forward he thinks an appropriate notification is important but before that they may want to do an environmental impact study. In addition, they may want to hire someone who is a professional at building these to tell them where it should go and what impact it will have on the land. Also, resident input is going to be absolutely critical.

Richard Jahnke and Bruce Freeman informed the Park Board they have both lived in Edina all of their lives and this past summer they went to different mountain biking trails throughout the Twin Cities area. They explained they decided to walk through the woods and between the trees in Braemar and around the golf course and realized that there was some very nice terrain there that could have these bike paths. Their next step was they contacted Reed Smidt who works at the City of Woodbury in the Parks Department and who single-handedly got a trail going in Woodbury and also got a grant written. They stated their next step was to make a proposal to the Park Board.

Mr. Freeman commented that a lot of people don't know very much about mountain biking so they tried to put a lot of information together. There are people in the audience here that are experts in the field of designing and being involved in the sport. He noted that they really want to emphasize trying to be a good neighbor working together on this.

Member Kathryn Peterson asked if there is a ballpark idea of what something like this would cost with the understanding there is not money in the budget for it. Reed Smidt, President of the Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC), indicated that he agrees with Mr. Keprios that they are looking to get a better evaluation and some more feedback on what the park holds as well as what the community is looking at for the residents. He stated before they get to that they need to make sure they have a good project and there are costs involved with that. Therefore, if you are looking for an evaluation or a study for the single track it varies but could go up to \$2,500 depending on how extensive it gets. He pointed out the environmental side is important as well and they want to be good stewards of the land so they will look at all factors and make sure it's the right fit for the community and organization as well. He noted that for a single track depending on the factors that are involved you can base it on square foot or mileage but it can range from \$15,000 to \$16,000 per mile but in comparison it's quite a bit lower than a paved path. Mr. Smidt explained there are grants available that they can look at, volunteer labor from local residents as well as MORC who will coordinate volunteers with the local communities that would bring that cost down even further.

Member Gieseke asked what percentage of Twin Cities residents are off-road cyclers? Mr. Smidt replied that based on the greater population of the metro area he doesn't know. Member Segreto commented this would bring in a lot of people from outside of Edina to which Mr. Smidt replied it could potentially, yes.

Mr. Keprios asked what kind of maintenance is typical for this kind of trail. Mr. Smidt responded MORC has trail crews at every trail and they have a trail session every week usually 2 to 2 ½ hours and they

look for issues and try to be ahead of the game as far as any problems that may come up. He noted that usually it's just a general maintenance; clearing back the trail and trimming the maintenance of the trail. He stated that if the City wanted to work with MORC and establish a memorandum of understanding to determine what they could do and couldn't do; however, general trail work as far as just fixing things and trimming would all be done by volunteers.

Mr. Jahnke informed the Park Board that Mr. Freeman and he are trying to organize an effort to try to get some volunteers. He indicated that there is a high school mountain biking league that started in the Twin Cities and Edina High School is thinking about starting a mountain biking league. Mr. Jahnke informed the Park Board that once the bikers enter the woods you don't know they are there and he doubts the golfers at Braemar would even see the people biking through there because the canopy is so dense. He noted that he thinks it would be an asset for the City of Edina for years to come and it's a fun, invigorating, good physical activity for people of all ages.

Mr. Freeman stated that one of the things about this is you get a lot of community developing around biking who get attached to the land and really want to help with the upkeep of the trails. He noted that right now the area is being totally taken over with buckthorn as well as there are some old oaks that are dying off and there is literally no new growth going on there. He indicated that as far as the trail he would really like to do some buckthorn removal and this would be a good start to eliminate a lot of it.

Mr. Smidt gave a power point presentation on the mountain biking trails. He noted they are just looking to get an evaluation and a cost estimate. Hopefully the city will then support the design and construction of a single track trail at Braemar.

Chair Steel asked Mr. Keprios what his recommendation is to which he replied the Park Board needs to discuss and decide whether or not this is a concept worth studying. Chair Steel asked what a study would entail. Mr. Keprios stated he would think take some advice from these folks and find a professional trail developer and also thinks they will need to get the Watershed District involved. He indicated they need to find out what it's going to cost, and who is going to volunteer as well as find out where the trail would be best suited because there may be a better location for it within Edina.

Chair Steel asked Mr. Keprios if he had any idea what the study would cost to which he replied he really doesn't but thinks it would be affordable enough if they were able to keep it under \$15,000 because it could probably be absorbed in their operating budget.

Member Jones asked if this is the only site in Edina that would be suitable for a mountain bike trail to which Mr. Freeman replied yes, the Braemar site is very unique in that it is not only big enough but it also has elevation which is important for a good design.

Member Kathryn Peterson asked Mr. Keprios if they were to approve in concept would it be okay to say that mountain bike trails might be good at some point in the future but we are not going to do anything immediately. Mr. Keprios replied that would be Park Board's call, he doesn't see it as staff's role necessarily to say yes or no when someone approaches the city. Member Kathryn Peterson replied that it's on the agenda to which Mr. Keprios replied it's on the agenda to give them the venue from a staff's standpoint. He stated that he thinks their mission has always been to try to find a way to say "yes" and if it's not a fit, it's not a fit but at least allow people to have the opportunity to go through the process and be told yes or no rather than just stop at the first stop which is staff's desk. Chair Steel stated she does appreciate the opportunity to be involved in this project in a very early stage and she appreciates residents bringing their ideas forward.

## **Public Comment**

Earl Faulkner, 7619 Gleason Rd., addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Ben Masnado, 6327 Valley View, addressed the Park Board in favor.

Tom & Kevin Delaney, 5717 Grove Street, addressed the Park Board in favor.

Tim Wegner, not an Edina resident but a professional trail builder. Member Deeds asked if the trails could be designed to be multiple use trails so they could also be used for cross country skiing. Mr. Wegner replied they do snowshoe on a lot of their winter mountain bike trails which is a wonderful outdoor winter activity. He added the mountain bikers really like it when people snow shoe on the trails because it packs it so they are able to ride on it with their fat tire wheel bikes.

Gary Bartoletti, 7421 Gleason, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Tom Wagner, 6004 Bonnie Brae Drive, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Raymond O'Connell, 4612 Valley View, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Carl Maijer, 6005 Bonnie Brae Drive, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Jill Faulkner, 7619 Gleason, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Barbara Kennedy, 7631 Gleason, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Jim McNulty, 6001 Bonnie Brae Drive, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Ken Horns, 5721 Grove St., stated he doesn't have any details but he knows that the Braemar clubhouse could use more business and would encourage the Park Board to take time and study this issue and try to understand more the costs and benefits of developing or not developing a bike trail before making a decision.

Jennifer Collins, 7500 Hyde Park Drive, addressed the Park Board in opposition.

Dianne Plunkett Latham, 7013 Comanche Ct., addressed the Park Board in opposition and added that she is also against the procedure.

Kevin ?????, 8300 W. 93<sup>rd</sup> St., addressed the Park Board in favor.

Member Segreto commented she was kind of shocked to see this on the agenda and stated she walks those trails almost every day as well as snowshoes and cross country skis so it's a sensitive area and it's a wildlife habitat. She added this is the only place in Edina that is wild and it really worries her and she doesn't even want to study it.

Member Kathryn Peterson commented that in addition to the concern about preserving the habitat is that significant portions of it are directly adjacent to residential areas and there is only a small section between the golf dome and arena that she would even consider studying.

Chair Steel indicated she is struggling with this item because they don't have the money to study this, it's not on their work plan and they really need a process for residents who have great ideas to bring them forward; however, they can't play favorites. She commented just because some are brought forward at certain times they really need to look at the Parks Department much more strategically and decide what their priorities are. What do residents really want and what things haven't they thought of that are also out there; therefore, she would like to talk more about process than the actual merits of this particular project.

Member Deeds indicated he has a couple of important points and potentially three if they are going to talk process. He stated they have no mountain bike trails in Edina and it is a rapidly growing sport, is a great sport for exercise and is also a good sport for kids. The second thing is finding the right location and are there other locations because he is a little skeptical given the natural habitat that they are talking about and the current uses, etc. He stated that he does think there is a valid point in that mountain biking is a good sport, although he doesn't necessarily agree that Braemar is the place to do it, but the overall lack of having any place for kids to do mountain biking is something they need looked at. When they looked at their surveys and other things that come back this was the kind of usage that ranked highly in the surveys of the residents. He stated as far as the need for mountain bike trails he absolutely agrees they need to think about this and there may not be a place to do it but they haven't looked at it. Member Deeds asked if it would be possible to incorporate mountain bike trails in the Nine Mile Trail plan. Mr. Keprios responded there is a well hidden mountain bike trail that does exist already that goes near where the Nine Mile Trail was going to go and every so many years they need to get permission from the railroad to go down there and knock it down because it's a little too aggressive. He added if you look on YouTube you will find it.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he learned today that this past weekend when the City Council had a work session and discussed the work plan for the coming year, including the Capital Improvement Plan, they decided they would like to earmark \$65,000 to do what they call a "strategic plan" for what is needed in the parks. He suggested the Park Board's reaction to that is include mountain biking as part of that strategic study and maybe Braemar is a good site. He doesn't know if there is a section along that Nine Mile route, there may or may not be one.

Member O'Leary stated he definitely thinks the idea of bringing mountain biking to Edina is a really good idea and is something he and his friends would do all of the time if there was one in Edina. It would be great activity for families and is just another great activity for people to do; therefore, he thinks they should look into it and would be very disappointed if they put a fork in it tonight because he thinks it deserves some study.

Member Almog indicated that she agrees with what Member O'Leary said but is hearing that we don't have the money to afford to look into this in our budget at this point and asked what they can do. Mr. Keprios responded he thinks there are a couple of options. First, they should consider using the Strategic Plan money that is coming their way to study the issue. He stated that he does think they have enough in their 2013 operating budget to rely on \$10,000 to \$15,000 and added that it's discretionary money that can be used for various unforeseen things so there are some dollars. Member Almog noted that the biggest thing from the comments that were made tonight regarding this type of project would be the impact on the environment because that sounds like the biggest concern. Member Deeds commented he would recommend incorporating it into one of those points of a larger use plan. He noted this particular proposal is a long ways down that road and he would like to look at the potential for other sites and just the potential for mountain bike trails within Edina given how little space they take. He added the potential to run them to a lot of different areas is pretty broad so incorporate that within a broader strategic plan.

Chair Steel commented that she is comfortable moving forward with the strategic plan that looks at everything and really gathers information from what residents want and tries to generate those new ideas. What is it we are lacking, not just mountain biking, and then laying them side by side and say what makes this good for Edina and what can we succeed in, what fits within our parks system.

Member Cella stated she shares the whole issue of process and when something is thrown in their lap because people are excited about it and say we should move it to the top of the priority list and maybe they can find \$15,000 in the operating fund process to her it says that \$15,000 could have been used for a project that was already at the top of their priority list that they are not doing. She commented not to say that mountain biking might be a very good thing for this community to look at but we have a process that we go through to evaluate things and put them in the order that they are. Therefore, she is a little uncomfortable moving certain items around just because people have a lot of excitement about something right at this moment. She stated she does agree that if the City Council had said they have some money that they will set aside to do a strategic study of what it is we do need in Edina and where we should be putting our resources that certainly this idea should be part of that strategic study. It may not be that Braemar Park is where it should be but there may be some other places; she can't see leap frogging it over other things that they've already prioritized and don't have the money for.

Chair Steel commented if they are doing a strategic study and spending money on it then why are they spending money on a little offshoot interest study. Member Gieseke replied he agrees and would be uncomfortable advancing this. He added that they talked about the process a couple of meetings ago and thinks they should stick to that. He noted that he thinks there is some merit to this project; however, he doesn't like the area they are proposing to put it and right now they don't even know if there is a demand for it in Edina. They are not even familiar enough with that to make a decision to go forward; however, he does like the idea of incorporating it into the strategic plan.

**Member Segreto made a motion, seconded by Member Jones, to table the specific proposal in front of them and authorize in their strategic planning process an investigation into the demand and potential location of mountain bike trails in the City of Edina.**

Ayes: Members Steel, Kathryn Peterson, Gieseke, Jacobson, Segreto, Cella, Jones, Deeds

Motion Carried

#### **VI.B. Revised Master Plan – Countryside Park.**

Mr. Keprios introduced Gabriel Grinde from Hoisington who has been very involved in the development of the master plan and Jim Wilson from SGN Wendell who was involved with the newest shelter buildings. Mr. Keprios reminded the Park Board that this is a project that has had a lot of input from the community since it first started in 2007. He noted they had a very comprehensive input process in 2008 and it has evolved in time. He added that they gathered from the neighborhood the amenities they wanted in the park as well as how they thought it would be best laid out. He indicated that it has changed only slightly since then for a number of reasons that Ms. Grinde went through. Mr. Keprios stated that he thinks they did a good job of listening to the neighborhood all along. He informed the Park Board because they now have the money in the Developer's Fund to finally move forward they are now ready to show the proposed master plan. He stated that he would like to have Park Board's review and comment to see if there is anything they feel is missing, does not line up right or have questions. They are hoping to show it to the neighborhood on Friday if everything is in sync on the Park Board they will move on for City Council's approval before they go out and start soliciting bids.

Member Deeds indicated they are short on multi-purpose fields in Edina and there are none in the plan to which Mr. Keprios replied he doesn't know that one could fit diagonally. Member Deeds asked if

some adaptations could be made to the plan for at least some of the younger kids with shorter fields in soccer and in lacrosse. Mr. Keprios replied he is not sure they have the distance for it as well as these are going to be heavily scheduled baseball fields and with multiple age groups using them they will be played on even more so it would be tough. Mr. Keprios indicated that the rectangular athletic field topic was discussed as far as part of the planning process where they brought in the athletic groups and the neighbors and both the neighbors and the EBA said no, they can't afford to lose those two fields; they are critical to the program and therefore it was a conscious decision made back then.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that one thing that has been added to this plan since the neighbors as a whole got together in 2008 is the pathway that's through the park. He explained at the beginning the neighbors stated they did not need a pathway because Bredesen Park is just down the way; however, with the Waters Development moving into the area the demographics are changing and there are going to be a lot of seniors. Therefore, they felt it was a very important amenity for the park and it brings a hard accessible safe surface to the park provides a wonderful recreation opportunity especially for the elderly. He noted perhaps in the future what can be added is a soft surface trail coming off of the paved loop to a little boardwalk overlooking the wetland area.

Member Kathryn Peterson recommended there be consideration for taller than average fencing along the left field line of the prep field and the right field line of the little league field such that people walking north won't get hit by foul balls.

Member Jones stated that in the master plan she would like to see a pedestrian and bike path both going into the park and in the park and therefore would like to see planning for those be included.

Member Cella commented who uses the playground because if someone has small children and is watching a little league game there is no way she would let her other kids go all the way over to the playground by themselves and as a parent feels you are not going to be able to use them both at the same time. She stated she doesn't know how many of the people who are using the park are just coming for the playground or are they using the playground while they are doing other things.

Member Jones commented because they are experiencing global warming and the temperatures are rising there are fewer and fewer days for ice and if they are investing \$400,000 to build this building she doesn't know if she feels comfortable doing that anymore. Mr. Keprios responded it was discussed at length in the neighborhood process and the number one thing they wanted back in their park was a hockey rink with lights and a building.

Member Deeds asked if it would make more sense to put the bathrooms where the dugouts are or in that general area instead of diagonally across the entire park from the baseball fields. Ms. Grinde replied that is a really tight area. Mr. Keprios responded it's not a lot different from what they have at Pamela, Garden, Weber, etc. They cannot always have them immediately next to every athletic field. Member O'Leary asked if they've thought about putting in some port-a-potties to which Member Kathryn Peterson replied that usually the neighbors aren't real wild about port-a-potties.

Mr. Wilson went through a power point presentation on the design of the proposed shelter building.

Member Jacobson asked if there are any means to enable concession stand capabilities for games. Mr. Keprios responded that wasn't on the radar screen but that isn't to say a concession couldn't be a mobile unit or perhaps have some small packaged items sold from the office.

Member Kathryn Peterson noted that she would challenge the City to find a contractor who is hungry enough to build this for less than \$400,000 because that seems like a lot of money. Mr. Wilson responded that includes utilities for \$50,000 as well as lighting for the rink, updated sewer and water connections, hydrant, etc.

Member Cella commented as she recalls at the last meeting \$330,000 was in the budget for Countryside Park and that is what was approved. Mr. Keprios responded that was just for Phase I, they weren't certain the Waters Development was going to go forward at that point so they wanted to at least get Phase I started which included pathways and the playground.

Member Deeds stated that if they are going to do this it needs to be promoted as more than just a neighborhood park because there is a lot going on and there is a lot of money going into this. Therefore, in order for this investment to make any kind of sense it has to be viewed and seen and promoted as a city wide asset and resource versus simply being a neighborhood park. He indicated the neighborhoods are very territorial about the parks and that is a lot of money going into one park if it's just going to be a neighborhood park. Mr. Keprios responded that it has functioned like that in the past with the hockey rink and permanent building so people travel from around Edina to use that park and the neighbors are okay with that. He indicated that he thinks this park is going to go from an underutilized park to a destination park and people are going to find this to be one of their more favorite playgrounds and they are going to want to use that shelter building.

Member Jones stated that she would like to clarify why they started down this path of going to this neighborhood and doing a master plan as opposed to any other neighborhood in Edina. She is trying to figure out how it happened so that Countryside Park is getting one million dollars in renovations while other parks aren't getting any money this year. Mr. Keprios explained when it was decided they needed to scale back the rinks at Countryside Park were taken out. As time went on the neighbors came forward and said they need a hockey rink and so before they jumped in to rebuild it they decided that it really needed to be placed in a north/south orientation which also meant it didn't make sense to keep the building where it was. It sort of took on a life of its own and a lot of it was just the neighborhood input in order to respond and react to that. He pointed out that the Waters Development and City Council made it very clear that the money should go to that park. Member Jones asked Mr. Keprios if he is saying that in the future when there are other developments that the money will go to the closest park available. Mr. Keprios replied hopefully through the strategic planning process the Park Board will have that figured out years ahead of time.

Member Jones stated that she wants to make sure this is not precedent setting and asked if any Park Board members feel that the closest park to any development should get all of that. Member Deeds replied no and that they've discussed this before there is not a well-developed process, it is a haphazard process which they saw last month with people wanting to rebuild a playground with their own \$100,000. He stated he agrees this is not precedent setting and that there are issues in all of this with appropriate priorities, equity issues and other things that have to be wrestled with by staff, City Council, and the Park Board and hopefully it is something they will get to. Mr. Keprios replied there are quite a few things that do happen that are out of our control.

#### **VI.C. Edible Playground Proposal – Lewis Park**

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board this is an item that was not on the long range or short range radar screen but is one that came to him from his own staff, Kristin Aarsvold, which he would like to give kudos for doing. The idea came from Eden Prairie where it has been extremely successful. It is a creative idea that is going to cost the city very little and funding will be secured from other sources to make this happen. Mr. Keprios explained that the reason it is before the Park Board is because it does



displace the use of a park where there currently is some open green space and because this is a different use of an existing park. He commented even though it is small in nature it is something he would really like the Park Board to weigh in on. In addition, he feels they should notify the neighbors and the athletic associations if this is something they are considering at Lewis Park.

Kristin Aarsvold, Recreation Supervisor, explained to the Park Board that Eden Prairie received some grant money to create an edible playground. Ms. Aarsvold indicated that as a representative from the department who sits on the "Statewide Health Improvement Program" (SHIP) which includes representatives from Bloomington, Richfield and Edina. It is part of their mission to improve food quality and improve access. One of the things that came out of SHIP was the farmer's market at Centennial Lakes. She informed the Park Board that Lewis Park is an area where they have some changing demographics and due to some Section 8 housing there are some lower income and socioeconomic issues. In addition, there are not a lot of great places to go for fresh fruit and vegetables and so the concept comes mainly from her belief that kids don't necessarily understand how food fuels your body for being physically active and she would like to help kids understand lifelong leisure skills such as gardening is exercise. She noted her proposal talks about the obesity epidemic and it talks about the census tract information she received from the Edina Resource Center. She noted the Edina Resource Center were the first people who came on board with her and the shared history they had in serving the underserved families in Edina. She stated that she knows they were able to receive a grant from Blue Cross Blue Shield and maybe they could earmark \$1,000 for the project.

Ms. Aarsvold indicated this would be a pilot program and she would have an evaluation process with a pre-season evaluation and a post-season evaluation for all of the kids who participate in the program. She explained that participants who would gain benefit from the garden would be the playground participants from the playground program at Lewis Park. This program is for 6 to 10 year-olds to which they average 38 kids throughout the summer and added that the impact goes wider than that because it goes back to the parents and younger siblings. Ms. Aarsvold commented that they currently provide grant-in-aid for kids who cannot afford their program.

Ms. Aarsvold pointed out they also have a neat partnership with DOW Water Process Solutions who over the years have donated a lot such as recycling containers in their parks to building bird houses and planting areas at other parks. She indicated that every year they come to them with a "Keep America Beautiful" initiative and after talking with them they have pledged support in helping to build the garden.

Ms. Aarsvold indicated that she is looking at getting her funding secured by March and begin construction. She informed the Park Board that she also just learned that the Fairview Southdale Foundation has granted them \$5,000 as well as the Bloomington Public Health has some money that they are willing to earmark for this program in the form of \$2,500. Therefore, it should only cost their department approximately \$1,500 to make this happen in Lewis Park. Ms. Aarsvold pointed out that she has also talked with Bob Prestrud, Park Foreman, who is very excited about this and noted that they could tie it into the irrigation system that is there so the gardens could be watered on weekends and/or off days.

Member Deeds stated that this is a no brainer, it's a great idea.

Chair Steel asked Mr. Keprios to clarify what his recommendation is. Mr. Keprios replied it would be to send notification to the neighbors within 1,000 feet and ask for their input via email, fax or mail but that it has to be in writing. Once you have received input set up a meeting for this to appear on the agenda

and allow for public input and then make your decision at the end of the meeting. Member Deeds asked what is being displaced to which Ms. Aarsvold replied open space, it's a 20 x 30 plat, very small, fully accessible and gravel based as well as there will be a garden shed with a lock.

Member Segreto asked if it will be handicapped accessible to which Ms. Aarsvold replied yes. Member Segreto asked about pesticide use to which Ms. Aarsvold replied it will be fully organic. Member Segreto asked what about critters coming in and eating the produce to which Ms. Aarsvold replied they do have a fence that should help. She also explained that they do have some great natural ideas to also try to keep out different things. She stated that in her mind the process is more important than the product.

Member Segreto commented that with the diversity in that area there are a lot of different food cultures coming from all over the world and it would be a really nice place to have some of the cultures get involved so it would be nice to see something other than tomatoes growing. Ms. Aarsvold pointed out that the concept used in Eden Prairie is they had a salsa garden, a pizza garden, lettuce and herbs, etc. She added they will enlist the help of the families that they work with and ask what they would like to plant. The process is going to be organic and it's a pilot project so who knows what will come of it.

Member Almog suggested if they are looking for volunteers that it may be a great May Term project for any seniors that may be interested.

Member Jones asked who would be the person responsible for this area, who would be maintaining it and what is the plan for the non-growing season. Ms. Aarsvold replied basically the park staff they could use some of their DOW volunteers as well as students who are signed up for the summer program to plant in the spring. During the summer they pretty much have kids on site four days a week along with their site leaders and playground leaders. She noted that she will also be making sure that things are being tended to, etc. Ms. Aarsvold indicated that starting in August they will run three camps with a contracted group to which their curriculum is similar to "U of M Simply Healthy Eating". She indicated that DOW has offered their support at the end of the season to kind of put the garden to bed but that there be a big harvest dinner with all of the people who have been involved during the season to which the garden will then be dormant for the rest of the season.

Member Jones asked if there will be any evening opportunities because a lot of people work and can't leave their children home during the day. Ms. Aarsvold replied that is something she has not thought about but is a unique concept that she will look into and see if maybe they could offer it as a family activity two nights a week or something.

Member Jones asked if there is a playground program at Yorktown Park to which Ms. Aarsvold replied no because there is no building at Yorktown Park which is what they need for their playground programs. Member Jones explained that there are community gardens being proposed by Do Town at Yorktown Park, which has not yet been discussed with the Park Board, and wondered if they should be putting this in a neighborhood park and would it make more sense to put by the proposed community garden. Ms. Aarsvold replied that DOW came on board as a local business and they are really excited and one of the reasons why is because it's basically in their backyard and they are enlisting their wellness committee to be a big part of this as well as a lot of their employees use the park. She stated that when she approached them about trying something at Cornelia School Park they said no.

Ms. Aarsvold indicated that she did talk to someone from the Garden Council about having some members come out once or twice to talk about gardening as a hobby. Dianne Plunkett Latham, member of the Edina Garden Council, informed the Park Board they have a sprouts group for youth and twice a year they have activities and if you are interested you could get the word out to your

people and maybe have one big group. She commented that she understands the program doesn't start until June 16<sup>th</sup> and their sprouts group normally starts in April but maybe they could use the City Greenhouse to start the plants and the participants could bring them home and germinate them on their windowsills and then they could be planted on June 16<sup>th</sup> at the edible garden and that is one thing you could tie it into. She noted that they are also trying to teach their youth about native plants and at the Edina Art Center they have a buckthorn abatement aka habitat restoration. Ms. Aarsvold replied that she would be very interested in having some kind of partnership.

**Member Deeds made a motion, seconded by Member Segreto, to approve the notification of the neighbors.**

Ayes: Members Steel, Kathryn Peterson, Gieseke, Jacobson, Segreto, Cella, Jones, Deeds  
Motion Carried

**VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS**

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board he has forward all emails to date to the Park Board.

**VIII. CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

None

**IX. STAFF COMMENTS**

None

**X. RECOGNITION OF JOHN KEPRIOS' YEARS OF SERVICE**

Chair Steel presented John Keprios with a plaque that stated "Distinguished Service the Edina Park Board congratulates John Keprios on his 35 year career with the City of Edina and thanks him for his dedicated service as staff liaison". The Park Board again thanked Mr. Keprios for all of his years of service.

Mr. Keprios thanked the Park Board for all of their hard work and that it has been really rewarding in so many ways. There are a lot of things he is very proud of and there are some things that he wishes he would have done different and hopefully he can pass those on to Ms. Kattreh so she doesn't make the same mistakes. He stated that what he is going to cherish the most are all of the people; everybody he works as well as the people he gets to serve with on a volunteer basis and the community. He wished everyone the best and noted that he is leaving everyone in great hands with Ms. Kattreh.

Meeting adjourned at 9:48 pm.